

★ news release

Cook - Interior 5634

CONSERVATION COMMISSION APPROVES FOUR NEW NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGES

The Sudbury Refuge is along the Sudbury and Concord Rivers in eastern Massachusetts, approximately 14 miles west of Boston. Annually the marshes along these rivers are flooded and significant numbers of important species of ducks nest here. The refuge will serve a dual role in waterfowl management: it will continue to provide for the populations of breeding birds that use the area regularly and also be a resting place for waterfowl from both inland and coastal flight lines.

The Lake Woodruff Refuge is in east-central Florida, along the St. Johns River a few miles south of where the river enters Lake George. Preservation of the low, isolated swamp and marshes surrounding Lake Woodruff will help meet the urgent need in this region for wetlands vital to waterfowl and other wildlife. Since 1850 Florida has been draining its wetlands for agriculture, industry, and urban development, converting more than 25 percent of its wetlands to other uses. It is estimated that after development this refuge will carry peak populations of 70,000 ducks and 30,000 coot.

The Pungo Refuge, in eastern North Carolina, about 15 miles southeast of Plymouth, lies in an area of low swamps having great value for waterfowl both during migration and for wintering. Large numbers of geese and ducks move back and forth between the Pungo Lake area, the famous Mattamuskeet Refuge to the east, and historic Currituck Sound to the north. The Pungo Refuge is vitally needed for wise management of this segment of the water fowl population of the Atlantic seaboard.

The Commission also approved the addition of 5,021 acres to three existing refuges and reapproved the purchase at higher prices (because of rising land values) of 2,248 acres for three refuges.

These actions of the Commission included the addition of 73 acres and reapproval of the purchase of 1,895 acres on the Oak Orchard Refuge, Genesee and Orleans Counties, New York; the addition of 437 acres and reapproval of 180 acres on the Ottawa Refuge, Lucas and Ottawa Counties, Ohio; the addition of 4,511 acres on the White River Refuge, Arkansas County, Arkansas; and the reapproval of 173 acres on the Anahuac Refuge, Chambers, Texas.

In addition to Secretary of the Interior Stewart L. Udall, members of the Migratory Bird Conservation Commission are Secretary of Agriculture Orville L. Freeman, Secretary of Commerce Luther H. Hodges, United States Senator Roman L. Hruska of Nebraska, United States Senator Lee Metcalf of Montana, Congressman Frank L. Karsten of Missouri; and Congressman Leon H. Gavin of Pennsylvania.

Ex officio members who attended the May 21 meeting in Washington, D. C., were Francis W. Sargent, Director, Division of Fisheries and Game, Massachusetts Department of Natural Resources; O. Earle Frye, Assistant Director, Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission; Clyde P. Patton, Executive Director, North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission; Dr. E. L. Cheatum, Assistant Director, Division of Fish and Game, New York Conservation Department; and Nelson Cox, Director, Arkansas Game and Fish Commission.

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